

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending. Claims 15-17 and 26-29 are allowed. By this Response, claims 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14-16, 18, 21-23 and 30 are amended and claims 8 and 25 cancelled. Reconsideration and allowance based on the above amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

Allowable Claims

Applicants appreciate the indication of claims 8, 9, 11, 12 and 21-25 as reciting allowable subject matter. Applicants note that the features of claim 8 is incorporated into claims 1 and 30 and the features of claim 25 is incorporated into claim 18. As claims 8 and 25 have been designated as containing allowable subject matter, applicant's respectfully submit that claims 1, 18 and 30 are now in condition for allowance.

Amendments to the Claims

Applicants note that claims 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 14-16 have been amended to remove the "means for" language. Applicants note that this amendment to the claims does not detract from the allowability of the subject matter within the claims. If the Examiner has concerns with this amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact applicant's representative in order to aid in resolving the Examiner's concerns.

Prior Art Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 6-10, 18-20 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Lewis (US 5,294,792) and claims 5, 7, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis in view of O'Connor, et al. (US 6,188,392). These are respectfully traversed.

Applicants note that independent claims 1, 18 and 30 have been amended to include allowable subject matter recited in dependent claims 8 and 25 as indicated above. Therefore,

rejection of the independent claims 1, 18 and 30 and their respective dependent claims 2-7, 10, 13, 14, 19 and 20 are now moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the above reasons, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-30 are now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad J. Billings (Reg. No. 48,917) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 14, 2006

By 

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